(c) if the legislation has not been enacted, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to provide for development and regulation of mineral resources in the territorial water, continental shelf, exclusive economic zone and other maritime zones of India and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, the Central Government has enacted the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 (17 of 2003) (the Act). The Act has been notified in the Gazette of India on 31.1.2003. Rules under section 35 of the Act have been framed and are being translated into Hindi for notifying in the Gazette of India. After the publication of the Rules in the Gazette of India, the areas will be thrown open for exploitation of resources.

(c) In view of the above, does not arise.

National Mineral Policy

1523. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are formulating a National Mineral Policy;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether Government would invite suggestion from the private players engaged in exploration activities before the policy is announced; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) to (d) The Government has already announced its National Mineral Policy for non-fuel and non-atomic minerals in 1993 and it is still in operation.

Atrocities on SCs/STs

†1524. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey in respect of atrocities, rapes and crimes committed against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes during the last three years, State-wise;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.